



Letter from the Ambassador

Presence of Mexico in Australia.

Despite the geographical distance and the relatively small Mexican community, the presence of Mexico in Australia continues to grow rapidly. This issue of *Mexico Down Under* depicts this situation in the articles included.



Indeed, during the month of February, Mexico successfully participated in the *Multicultural Festival* in Canberra, by means of a promotional booth open to the public and the presentation of the folk dance group *Mexico Lindo*, which delighted the audience with their artistic performances.

Also, Mexican filmmakers played a leading role in the *Queer Screen – Mardi Gras Film Festival* in Sydney, by presenting two outstanding films: "*Four Moons*" and "*I am Happiness on Earth*". Mexican cinema is quickly

embracing subjects such as sexual diversity and respect to otherness. During the festival, Hugo Catalán, a cast member in both films, was proudly sponsored by the Mexican Embassy to travel to Australia in order to attend the screenings and meet with the public in the two fully packed functions. On the subject of Mexican filmmakers gaining further recognition for their artistic quality, it is worth mentioning that also in February Mexican filmmaker's won four *Oscars* During the *87th Academy Awards*: Alejandro González Iñárritu (best film, best director and screenplay) and Emmanuel Lubezki (best cinematography), in recognition of their outstanding work in *Birdman*. Alejandro González Iñárritu became the second Mexican in a row to win the Oscar for best director, after his colleague Alfonso Cuarón took home the same prize during 2014 for the film *Gravity*.





Also in February, the "Day of the Mexican Army and Air Force" was celebrated for the first time in Australia. The event was headed by the Military and Air Attaché of Mexico, Colonel Crisóforo Martínez Parra in the Residence of Mexico. The ceremony was attended by the Director of Protocol of the Department of Defence of Australia, Commander David Jones; the Dean of the Military and Air Attachés in the Australian Territory, Colonel Acton Kilby; as well as Military, Naval and Air Attachés accredited in this country, amongst others.

Another world-renowned "Mexican citizen" with a growing presence in Australia is Agave, the plant that brings us Tequila and Mezcal, two of the most popular Mexican spirits nowadays. Two drinks that embody essences of Mexico's regions and bespeak the traditions handed down over the centuries from one generation to the next. They are inextricably linked to Mexico's history, identity, culture and traditions.



In the *Mexicans Down Under* section, a narrative of the life and work of a new member of the Mexican community in Australia is told, catholic priest Herick Omar Bolaños Chávez, from the city of Oaxaca, and who belongs to the congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians. Despite his youth, Father Bolaños has a solid theological, philosophical and humanitarian training, as well as extensive experience on social work in various countries in Asia-Pacific.



This issue of *Mexico Down Under* is complemented by two more items: The first one on the presentation of Carlos Fuentes *International Award for Creative Writing in Spanish 2015*, created in 2012 to honor the memory of the greatest narrator in our literature. The second one about the "Youth Credit Program", which was recently launched targeting entrepreneurs ages 18 to 30 years old who want to start a business or grow the existing one. The aim is for young entrepreneurs to access credit in the best possible conditions, so

that they can shift from ideas to action and from action to achievement.

I sincerely hope that you all enjoy this issue of *Mexico Down Under*....

Global Mexico

CARLOS FUENTES INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR CREATIVE WRITING IN SPANISH.



During the ceremony to present the “Carlos Fuentes International Award” President Enrique Peña Nieto emphasized that Mexico is strengthening its democratic values and institutions in order to achieve social justice, as well as to create better opportunities for the population.

In Mexico, he continued, “democracy is already a valuable heritage of all Mexicans, and we must all preserve it.” He said that democracy, “not only allows us to participate in free elections and choose our representatives; it also reinforces the exercise of other fundamental rights such as freedom of the press and freedom of expression.”

He added that in a democracy, all voices, ideas and viewpoints converge. “Democracy strengthens transparency and accountability, and above all, obliges the authorities to respond to the needs of the majority rather than the interests of a few. Hence the importance of supporting our democracy and its institutions,” he declared.

As he presented the Carlos Fuentes International Award for Creative Writing in Spanish to Nicaraguan writer Sergio Ramírez Mercado, the president said that the road to a better country is the path of democracy. “As our laureate Sergio Ramírez, a man of words and action has said: democracy is a work in progress.”

“Let us never forget this: democracy and its full exercise is the path to rights, the path to freedom, equality and development,” he said.

At the event, held at the National Museum of Anthropology, President Peña Nieto said “we are proud that two brilliant Mexicans from the world of film, Alejandro González Iñárritu and Emmanuel Lubezki, received Oscars, which honours the talent of these two Mexicans.”

”As a country we are proud that Mexicans can succeed and excel both here and outside Mexico. As a government, we are concerned with creating the best conditions, working to ensure that our country has the best space so that every individual can write his personal success stories, so that every individual will find the best space for building a path of success and personal fulfilment,” he said.

The president said that the life of writer Sergio Ramírez, “Is that of a congruent man who has linked words to actions.” Indeed, he added, “Words and actions have been expressed in his life through three great moments of self-definition: the first was when he took the heroic decision to leave the comfort of his life as a lawyer and an academic to take his family to Berlin and become a writer.”

“The second major turning point was when he left the safety of his study to join the ranks of the Sandinista Revolution and fight for its ideals. These were times of great risk for you. So much so that Mexico offered its embassy in Nicaragua to provide shelter and protection for the Group of Twelve, in which you played a key role.

“Following the triumph of the revolution and after its democratic confirmation at the polls, you assumed the Vice Presidency of your country, where you worked hard to improve Nicaraguans’ quality of life, taking education and culture to every corner of the country,” he declared.

President Peña Nieto said that he experienced his third defining moment in the 1990s: when he chose to devote himself fully to his vocation as a writer. “As a narrator, you have shared the stories of your country with the world and reflected on international issues through culture. You have given a voice to those who did not have one. You have told us what the women and men in the Sandinista Revolution experienced, so that the memory of that social struggle is not lost.

You have also recovered Nicaraguan characters and writers. Your texts mention the extraordinary poet Rubén Darío, who has been called the great innovator of language,” he said.

“Our laureate’s work is heir to magical realism and the Latin American Boom, the tradition of Juan Rulfo, Gabriel García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes and Mario Vargas Llosa, all of whom are your friends,” he said.



BY HONORING ME, THE AWARD HONORS THE SMALL COUNTRY I COME FROM AND CENTRAL AMERICAN LITERATURE: SERGIO RAMÍREZ

For his part, the Nicaraguan writer honoured with the Carlos Fuentes International Prize, Sergio Ramírez Mercado, said that when he received the news that he had been awarded the prize he thought that the stars had been aligned in his favour, which happens so rarely in life.

“I could not have hoped for a better alignment. An award that bears the name of Carlos Fuentes, for which my candidacy was proposed by the Gabriel García Márquez International Foundation of Journalism, the fact that the winner of the first competition two years ago was Mario Vargas Llosa, and that it was presented to me on the centenary of the birth of Julio Cortázar,” he explained.

On receiving the award, represented by a sculpture by a great artist, his friend, Vicente Rojo, he added, “I cannot forget the Central American writers and artists who were hosted by Mexico, a generous land of asylum, where they were driven into exile by all the problems that have ravaged Central America.”

President of the National Council for Culture and the Arts Rafael Tovar y de Teresa explained that the Carlos Fuentes International Award for Creative Writing in Spanish was created in 2012, “To honour the memory of the most universal narrator in our literature. It is an award that reflects the significance of a literary work and the strength of the career of its author.”

Mexican Landscape

YOUTH CREDIT: YOUR FIRST CREDIT PROGRAM



In this era of rapid change, in order to unleash the potential of our country, the government endeavours to release the potential of every Mexican; especially that of our young people. That is the rationale behind the program to support youths to receive quality education and become successful entrepreneurs.

During February the Program “Youth Credit: Your First Credit Program” was launched targeting entrepreneurs ages 18 to 30 years old who want to start a business or grow one they already have. The aim is for young entrepreneurs to access credit in the best possible conditions, so that they can shift from ideas to action and from action to achievement.

Thanks to the support of Nacional Financiera, México’s development bank, the interest rate will be one of the lowest in the market and young people will have a period of four years to pay off their credit; including a grace period of up to 12 months on repayment of capital. This program has four different products:

- ⇒ Financing facility from 50 thousand to 150 thousand pesos (4,300 to 13,000 AUD) targeted to young entrepreneurs that want to start up a business.
- ⇒ Financing facility from 150 thousand pesos to one million pesos (13,000 to 86,000 AUD), also targeted to young entrepreneurs that want to start up a business.
- ⇒ Financing facility for up to 300 thousand pesos (26,000 AUD) for young entrepreneurs that are already established and registered with the fiscal authorities.
- ⇒ Financing facility for up to 2.5 million pesos (215,000 AUD) for young entrepreneurs that have been established for more than one year. This financing facility will have a five year repayment period.



During the launch of this program the President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, noted that the aim is “not only to give them loans but also to accompany them in their projects by giving them guidance and training and sharing experiences on how to ensure that their projects mature and succeed.” He also mentioned that the government wants “To bet on the creativity and entrepreneurship of the young people of Mexico to support their initiatives and enable them to achieve personal fulfillment.”

Mexico’s Secretary of Finance and Public Credit, Luis Videgaray Caso, considers that this financial service is a bold, innovative step to favour the young people of Mexico. This facility was enabled thanks to the program of structural reforms that Mexico developed and is now benefiting Mexican families.

This new loan program for young people, which will be cheaper and easier to access than others in the market, gives a special status to the new generation underlying the fact that the development of Mexico, Mexican entrepreneurship and job and value creation are linked to the dynamic participation of young entrepreneurs.”

The Association of Mexican Banks (AMB) considers that this programme to promote Mexico’s young entrepreneurs, a joint action by development and commercial banks, shows that the objectives of the Financial Reform are being attained. The fact that young entrepreneurs can have credits at very affordable costs and above all, consistent with the nature of their projects, shows that the government’s policy is turning development banking into an agent for people, activities or regions that require a special impulse. The AMB President informed that funding will be awarded with the joint participation of development banks, through Nacional Financiera, and commercial banks, represented initially by Banamex, Santander and Bancomer.

Mexico acknowledges that its youth is one of its most valuable assets. The talent, energy and creativity of our young people constitute the greatest transformative force, which can move Mexico towards horizons of greater prosperity and wellbeing.

“Your First Credit” program is a financial product that confirms this commitment and confidence in the talent of young entrepreneurs.



AGAVE FROM MEXICO. IT IS TIME FOR A TOAST!



Agave is the plant that brings us the **Tequila** and **Mezcal**, two of the most popular Mexican Spirits nowadays. Two drinks that embody essences of Mexico's regions and bespeak the traditions its makers have handed down over the centuries from one generation to the next. They are inextricably linked to Mexico's history, identity, culture and traditions.

Both Tequila and Mezcal are made from Agave, but the kind of Agave plant is different between them. Tequila comes from *Agave tequilana weber* blue variety, which is mainly produced in state of Jalisco. Mezcal can be made from 14 different varieties of Agave grown in 8 states of Mexico -being Oaxaca the most important-. The taste of each Agave spirits depends of the kind of plants and the product classification.

There are different classifications of the Agave Spirits, depending on the mix or the aging period: Silver (also knowns as *Blanco*), Gold (*Reposado*), Aged (*Añejo*) or Extra Aged (*Extra Añejo*). There are other classifications, particularly in Tequila, which are: 100% Agave (of *Agave tequilana weber*) or Te-

quila (51% of *Agave tequilana weber* and 49% of other Agave plants).

Look for the original! Tequila and Mezcal are protected by *Denomination of Origin*, which ensures that the product has been manufactured according to the Mexican regulations and laws. When drinking Tequila and Mezcal, absolutely look for this label (if you don't want to put your health at risk!)

Mezcal is a great example of the new flavors of Mexican drinks. Known in the *nahuatl* (Aztec) mythology as "the coming of heaven drink", its traditional character, smoky taste and the variety of presentations makes Mezcal a unique drink among connoisseurs. The categories most demanded are the Gold Mezcal, Gold Mezcal with worm, Aged Mezcal and Aged Mezcal with worm. Traditionally the worm inside the bottle symbolizes an aphrodisiac and a flavoring; the truth is that the worm is used as a quality icon that has nothing to do with the taste or color of Mezcal.

Agave is on the rise: the exports of Tequila during 2014 increased 10% more than the previous year –a rate of 328 liters per minute consumed in more than 120 countries!-. On the side of Mezcal, exports during the first half of 2014 were 48% bigger than the same period of 2013.



There is no doubt that Tequila and Mezcal are the top two spirits of Mexico, but there are other Agave spirits with great taste, like *Sotol* and *Bacanora*, as well as other Agave-based products, like syrup, nectar and inulin, which is the main fructan of agave, used as a probiotic and a source of fiber. Try them all, you will not be disappointed!

Agave, named by European scientist Carl Linnaeus in 1753, means “admirable”, and in truth, it deserves great admiration. It is the Soul of México.

¡Salud!

PRO MÉXICO

Trade and Investment

We invite you to experience the flavors of Mexican Agave visiting **Agave Love**. This is an exciting networking event where you can share the passion and knowledge of the Agave spirits of Mexico amongst growers, producers, bartenders, spirits professionals and enthusiasts over a two-day networking event in Sydney during 22 – 23 of March 2015. For more information, please visit **Agave Love** web page, www.agavelove.com.au

GLOBAL MEXICO



Mexican food finds new home in UK

London.- Mexican cuisine can be “exported” to the United Kingdom with the use of local ingredients, a group of well-known Mexican chefs agreed.

In a round-table discussion, Mexican chef Solange Muris said she is convinced that “Mexican food can be made with local ingredients”. It would make the meals more viable and fresher, she added.

“The use of local ingredients is a positive trend. It makes the food more honest and coherent,” said Alfredo Villanueva.



Tortilla queen reigns in Argentina

Buenos Aires.- Five years ago, Gabriela Setien Villar, from the Mexican Gulf state of Veracruz, decided to make tortillas using the ancestral and complex process of nixtamalization, invented by Mexico's pre-Hispanic cultures.

What began with a small corner in her house became a business known as “Las tortillas de Pancho Villa”, which now supplies 40 restaurants in Buenos Aires with a daily production of up to 1,800 tortillas.



Diego Rivera works on show in Singapore

Singapore.- The exhibition “Diega Rivera: Pride of Mexico” was opened as part of the celebrations of Singapore's independence and the 40th anniversary of its establishment of relations with Mexico.

The show has been mounted in the Lim Hak Tai Gallery of the Nanyang Academy Of Fine Arts. It consists of 34 works from the 52-year career of Rivera (1886-1957), the Mexican embassy in Singapore reported.

MEXICAN CINEMA: A SUCCESS STORY



Mexico has a long cinematic tradition that goes back to the very first days of the seventh art. During the 1940s and 1950s, the so called Golden Age era of Mexican cinema saw many renowned actresses and actors star in Hollywood productions, as well as many talented Mexicans direct and participate in multimillionaire productions.

Forty years later, in a period that has been known as the New Mexican Cinema, the film industry has undergone an unprecedented revival, showcasing topics such as urban life, snapshots of modern Mexican families and social critique. This surge has also been reflected in the participation of movies in Festivals and international awards.

The latest examples of this are the four Oscars that were awarded during the 87th Academy Awards to Alejandro González Iñárritu (best film, best director and screenplay) and Emmanuel Lubezki (best cinematography), in recognition of their outstanding work in *Birdman (or The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)*. While they were not the first Mexican born people to earn an Oscar (an honour that goes to Chihuahua-born Anthony Quinn for his role in *Viva Zapata*, 1953), what is remarkable is the fact that Alejandro González Iñárritu became the second Mexican in a row to win the Oscar for best director, after his colleague Alfonso Cuarón took home the same prize during 2014 for the film *Gravity*. Even more remarkable is the fact that Emmanuel Lubezki had also received the prize for best cinematography in 2014, for his work in the same film.

Mexican cinema is present not only in Hollywood, but also closer to home. This year, two Mexican films (*Four Moons* and *I am Happiness on Earth*) were screened at the Queer Screen -Mardi Gras Film Festival in Sydney, in the context of one of the largest public events in Australia. Mexican cinema is quickly embracing subjects as sexual diversity and respect to otherness, a reflection of a country in rapid transformation and of a modern, open society. It's worth noting that actor Hugo Catalán, a cast member in both films, was proudly sponsored by the Mexican Embassy to attend the screenings and converse with the public, in two fully packed functions.



While not young, the story of Mexican cinema is definitely beginning a new chapter, one that is assured to bring us many new surprises in the future. Congratulations to our recently Oscar-awarded people, and see you next year!

Mexican Armed Forces Day in Australia



For the first time, on February 19, the "Day of the Mexican Army and Air Forces" was celebrated in Australia. The event was headed by the Military and Air Attaché of Mexico, Colonel DEM Crisóforo Martínez Parra in the Residence of Mexico.

The ceremony was attended by the Director of Protocol of the Department of Defence of Australia, Commander David Jones; the Dean of the Military and Air Attachés in the Australian territory, Colonel Acton Kilby; as well as Military, Naval and Air Attachés accredited in this country, among others.

Minister Victor M. Treviño, as Charge d'Affaires, a.i., served as host. He welcomed attendees and introduced Colonel Martínez Parra, who gave a brief message referring to the history of our armed forces and their mission. In addition, he explained the significance of this date for our country, as it marks the 102nd Anniversary of the Mexican Army.



Mexicans Down Under



Greetings to all of you.

I am Herick Omar Bolaños Chávez from the city of Oaxaca, a catholic priest of the congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians. This is a short presentation of myself.

I entered into the seminary in Mexico City at the age of 19. A year after, I was transferred to Guadalajara to study Philosophy for three years. Once I had finished those studies, I went through a year of silence and prayer. After this deep spiritual experience I was sent to the Philippines to do Masters in Theology. Here I also had the opportunity to learn English and to acquire some knowledge of Tagalog. After the second year of theology, I did a year of service in Vietnam. In this year I was asked to help with the formation of the Vietnamese seminarians

as well as learning the culture and the language.

Once the year of service had finished, I went back to the Philippines to finish my studies. Then I was sent to Rome, Italy to do a Licentiate on Human Mobility. Being in Europe, I took the opportunity to go to Portugal to study Portuguese as well. Thus, after thirteen years of studies I was ordained priest in Oaxaca the first of March, 2014.

I arrived in Adelaide seven months ago to work as the chaplain for the Spanish speaking community in Adelaide and assistant priest of Mater Christi Parish.

As I said in the beginning, I belong to the congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians. My congregations works exclusively for migrants in 31 countries. We have been in Mexico for around 30 years and we have established a net of assistance for migrants named: “Red Casas del Migrante” These houses for Migrants are mostly in our borders with the USA and Guatemala. In other Countries, besides the social and legal assistance, we have multicultural parishes, centers for migration studies and libraries. We also have programs with universities that want to include studies on human mobility in their curriculum. I might proudly say, that we are highly specialized on migration since we have been doing this for more than a hundred years.

I will not go further on my personal presentation instead I would like to reaffirm my greetings to every Mexican in Australia. A prayer for all of you and a wish of peace and success in all your endeavors.

Fr. Herick Bolanos

An investment from Australia

Industry superannuation fund investment services provider IFM Investors (IFMI) has entered another infrastructure deal, this time acquiring a 24.99 per cent stake in a Mexican infrastructure group. IFMI, formerly Industry Funds Management, will acquire the stake in Organización de Proyectos de Infraestructura (OPI), which owns Concesionaria Mexiquense (Conmex), the company in charge of the 111km Mexican toll road Circuito Exterior Mexiquense (CEM).

“Actúa, Ven por tu acta”

Como parte de las acciones anunciadas por el Presidente Enrique Peña Nieto , los mexicanos en el exterior podrán obtener copias certificadas de sus actas de nacimiento expedidas en México a través de nuestra red de Embajadas y Consulados.

Esta medida responde a una demanda histórica de nuestros connacionales y beneficiará a todos los mexicanos en el exterior, particularmente a aquellos que no cuentan con un documento que acredite su nacionalidad mexicana.

Para obtener las copias certificadas del acta de nacimiento, el interesado debe presentarse personalmente en el Consulado o Embajada de México que le corresponde, con una identificación y pagar el costo de \$13.00 dólares estadounidenses por cada copia certificada.

Cabe destacar que:

- Se debe contar con los datos completos de la persona interesada: nombre completo, fecha de nacimiento, lugar en donde fue registrada la persona o CURP (Clave Única de Registro Poblacional) para poder localizar su registro en la base de datos de RENAPO (Registro Nacional de Población).
- Las copias certificadas que se emitan en los Consulados y Embajadas de México tendrán plena validez, como si se hubieran obtenido en el estado de la República donde nacieron.

El gobierno de México invita a todos los mexicanos residentes en el exterior que lo requieran a beneficiarse de este servicio y acudir a la Embajada o Consulado más cercano para obtener una copia certificada de su acta



Sunday Brunch with Mexico

Last Sunday 22nd February, Lish Fejer, Presenter of Sunday Brunch, at 666 ABC Canberra, invited Minister María Luisa González, responsible for Economic Affairs and Cooperation at the Embassy of México, to share the very Mexican cake *Three Milks Cakes*. Please visit the network's website to learn how to make this cracking fabulous dessert:

[http://www.abc.net.au/local/recipes/2015/02/22/4184791.htm?§ion=recipe&date=\(none\)](http://www.abc.net.au/local/recipes/2015/02/22/4184791.htm?§ion=recipe&date=(none))

Dear friends,

If you have any question or comments regarding this publication please feel free to contact us at embaaustralia@sre.gob.mx

Se invita a los mexicanos a compartir sus historias de éxito en Australia, mandándolas en no más de una cuartilla arial 12 y con fotografías a vtrevino@sre.gob.mx.

Embassy of Mexico Team

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